DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 102 070 SO 008 112

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TITLE A Two Year Longitudinal Study of the Impact of a "Man: A Course of Study" Preservice Social Studies Methods Course on the Classroom Teaching of Practicing Professionals.
PUB DATE 20 Nov 74
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council for Social Studies (Chicago, Illinois, November 1974)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Anthropology; Changing Attitudes; *Classroom Techniques; Educational Research; Education Courses; Elementary School Curriculum; Methods Courses; Preservice Education; *Process Education; Projects; *Social Studies; Surveys; *Teacher Attitudes; *Teaching Methods; Teaching Skills; Transfer of Training; Use Studies
IDENTIFIERS *Man A Course of Study

ABSTRACT

This study assesses the degree of influence that the elementary curriculum project "Man: A Course of Study" (MACOS) and its process approach has on the use of teaching strategies of first and second year elementary teachers. The sample teachers had been enrolled in an undergraduate social studies methods course that used MACOS. Of the 17 teaching strategies associated with MACOS, 12 were used by 60 percent or more of the teachers. Five teaching strategies were used by 47 percent or less of the teachers. The vast majority ranked MACOS as highly influential in their choice of teaching strategies. The teaching strategies used by the greatest number of teachers were comparison and contrast, learning by observing, organizing by theme or concept, small group discussion, and large group discussion or working group. The subject areas outside of social studies which most used MACOS strategies were science, math, reading, and language arts respectively. Only two strategies--use of student feedback questionnaires and non-narrated movies--were not used by a majority of the surveyed teachers. Over half the teachers indicated that MACOS had a positive effect on their thinking about what constitutes a good subject curriculum, attitudes on how children should be taught, and how greater cooperation can be developed in the classroom. (Author/DE)

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Year Longitudinal Study of the Impact of a Man: A Course of Study Preservice Social Studies Methods Course on the Classroom Teaching of Practicing Professionals

by Bob King

During the 1970-71 school year Indiana University of Pennsylvania entered into an agreement with Eastern Regional Institute for Education (ERIE) to become engaged in an installation and dissemination program for Man: A Course of Study (MACOS). This program received major support from the National Science Foundation (NSF) and was directed by Dr. John Herlihy of the ERIE staff. Under the leadership of Dr. George A. W. Stouffer, dean of the School of Education at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, the staff consisting of Ms. Gail Gerlach, campus school teacher and Dr. Robert King, professor of Education, formed the university team for this experimental program.

The purpose of the program was to establish a dissemination and installation center at Indiana University for the Man: A Course of Study social science curriculum. In addition to this purpose the program design also had a component built into it to ascertain whether the teaching strategies associated in the MACOS would serve as a change agent for affecting classroom teacher behavior not only in the social studies but also in other curricula areas within the elementary school.

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The college professor employed the methodologies, techniques, and materials of the course in the social studies methods class. It served as the basis of preservice social science education course for elementary education majors. The campus school teacher taught Man: A Course of Study to intermediate grade pupils. Through the team's mutual efforts, preservice students in the methods course, in observation classes, and in student teaching the preservice teacher had the opportunity to watch and teach this model elementary social science curriculum.

Purpose of the Study

It was the purpose of this study to assess the degree of influence that Man: A Course of Study and its process approach had on the use of teaching strategies of first and second year elementary teachers. These teachers were enrolled in the social studies methods course EL. 411 The Teaching of Social Studies at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Procedures

A questionnaire was devised to assess the selected students' feelings about the transfer of MACOS teaching strategies in their own teaching experiences.

A listing of the select group was constructed from the class lists of EL. 411, from the years 1970-71 and 1971-72. The questionnaire was mailed to each of the 265 first and second year teachers included in the survey.

Data Obtained from the Survey

Of the 265 selected students from Indiana University of Pennsylvania who had been enrolled in EL. 411, a total of 169 responded to the questionnaire. This figure represented a sixty-four per cent return.

Based on answers supplied by the respondents on the initial page of the survey, it was found that 144, or eighty-five per cent of the respondents had taught since their graduation from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Twenty-five respondents, or fifteen per cent, replied that they had had no teaching experience since their graduation.

It was the purpose of this study to assess the degree of influence that Man: A Course of Study had on actual teaching experiences of the graduates. Therefore, only data supplied by the 144 respondents who had taught was considered in the actual presentation of data which follows.

The data of response by the first and second year teachers was tabulated numerically for each column listed in the questionnaire. Tabulated responses in the questionnaire were converted to percentages in order to more clearly present the data.

Table I shows the degree of influence and the use of teaching strategies associated with Man: A Course of Study.

Twelve teaching strategies listed were used by sixty per cent or more of the teachers. Five teaching strategies were used by forty-seven per cent or less of the teachers.

Elementary teachers who stated that they actually used a specific teaching strategy were then asked to indicate the degree of influence their MACOS course had had. The ranges of influence included four categories: highly influential; moderately influential; slightly influential; and not influential. Response figures here also are represented by percentage figures for the respondents.

Page Three of the Questionnaire

On page 3 of the actual questionnaire, the respondents were to check or list subject areas other than social studies in which they employed MACOS teaching strategies. Teaching strategies included the 17 strategies previously listed on page 2 of the questionnaire.

Only a slight minority of the 144 respondents gave "no reply" on the evaluation of the degree of influence Man: A Course of Study had on their teaching strategies in the elementary school classroom.

Twelve items, or teaching strategies, were used by over half of the respondents. Responses ranged from 67 per cent to 95 per cent of the teachers employing specific teaching strategies. Those teaching strategies used by the greatest number of teachers (80 per cent or more) were: comparing and

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TABLE I

Degree of Influence and the Use of Teaching Strategies Associated with Man: A Course of Study Among First and Second Year Teachers.*

Teaching Strategies	No Response	Do you use this strategy in your teaching: Yes	No	If yes, please indicate the degree of influence your MACOS course has had in your use of each of the teaching strategies: Highly Influential	Moderately Influential	Slightly Influential	Not Influential
1. Comparing and contrasting	4	95	1	43	48	7	2
2. Activities (learning by doing)	3	95	2	68	22	9	1
3. Learning by observing	6	83	11	35	45	18	2
4. Use of models	5	77	18	31	48	17	4
5. Simulation games	8	37	55	65	27	4	4
6. Organizing ideas by theme or concept	6	81	13	30	44	19	7
7. Analytic and intuitive thinking	8	70	22	35	45	15	5
8. Small discussion or working groups	4	85	11	57	29	12	2
9. Large discussion or working groups	3	92	5	38	42	15	5
10. Open-ended questions	9	76	15	53	32	11	4
11. Student feedback questionnaires	10	33	57	62	15	17	6
12. Problem-solving approach	10	67	23	46	37	15	2
13. Value inquiry	11	60	29	40	43	14	3
14. Non-narrated movies	10	13	77	32	26	21	2
15. Illustrated booklets	8	47	45	31	25	32	12
16. Role playing	4	74	22	40	38	17	5
17. Problem-skits	8	36	56	37	42	15	6

*All figures are expressed in percentages.

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contrasting (95 per cent); learning by observing (83 per cent); organizing by theme or concept (81 per cent); small groups (85 per cent); and large group discussion or working groups (92 per cent).

A teacher who used a specific teaching strategy was then asked to rate the degree of influence the MACOS course had on his/her use of that strategy. All 17 items showed that over half of the teachers rated the MACOS course as being a positive influence on their teaching. It appears that the MACOS curriculum used as a basis for the social studies methods course had a high degree of positive influence on the use of the listed teaching strategies by the first and second year teachers.

There were only five teaching strategies which were used by 47 per cent of the first and second year teachers. These strategies were: simulation games (used by 37 pre cent of the teachers; student feedback questionnaires (33 per cent); non-narrated movies (13 per cent - the least used of any of the teaching strategies); illustrated booklets (47 per cent); and problem skits (36 per cent). Of these teaching strategies, all, except non-narrated movies, require increased teacher time and planning in order to effectively use the strategy in an actual classroom situation. Could teachers possibly be failing to employ these types of teaching strategies because of their own personal lack of effort or because of a lack of adequate planning time available in the average teaching day?

Table II shows the degree of influence and the use of teaching strategies associated with MACOS in relation to curricular areas in the elementary school other than social studies.

Subject areas selected for teacher response included the four major curricular areas: reading, math, language arts and science.

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TABLE II

Degree of Influence and the Use of Teaching Strategies Associated with Man: A Course of Study in Relation to Curricular Areas in the Elementary School other than the Social Sciences.*

Teaching Strategies	Check the column(s) of the subject areas						
	Reading	Math	Language Arts	Science		Others	None
1. Comparing and contrast	76	53	52	72		9	2
2. Activities (learning by doing)	66	82	72	75		10	-
3. Learning by observing	33	61	37	84		9	3
4. Use of models	18	54	23	67		10	14
5. Simulation games	30	26	29	18		3	34
6. Organizing ideas by theme or concept	56	45	53	60		9	8
7. Analytic and intuitive thinking	46	57	32	59		6	13
8. Small discussion or working groups	85	49	46	60		8	3
9. Large discussion or working groups	61	60	65	62		9	9
10. Open-ended questions	53	35	40	57		7	15
11. Student feedback questionnaires	18	12	15	13		4	51
12. Problem-solving approach	38	59	21	67		7	8
13. Value inquiry	40	16	28	26		8	33
14. Non-narrated movies	6	2	8	6		1	62
15. Illustrated booklets	6	8	23	33		4	33
16. Role playing	62	17	48	15		9	10
17. Problem-skits	37	11	30	11		8	36

*All figures are expressed in percentages.

Ranking the subject areas in order of use of MACOS strategies, from highest use to lowest use show: science (10 strategies used by 51 per cent or more of the teachers); math and reading (7 strategies); and language arts (4 strategies used by 51 per cent or more of the teachers).

Those teaching strategies used by 51 per cent or more of the teachers in all four major subject areas were: comparing and contrasting; learning-by-doing-activities; and large group discussion or working groups.

Only two teaching strategies, use of student feedback questionnaires and non-narrated movies, were not used by 51 per cent or more of the surveyed teachers. These two teaching strategies were used by less than fifty per cent of the teachers in page two of the study, also.

The learning-by-doing teaching strategy was used in all subject areas surveyed. This reinforces the concept of the activities approach stressed in Man: A Course of Study.

Table III shows the responses of practicing teachers on general changes in teaching style or attitude which may have been related to the previous exposure to the MACOS curriculum. There were four ranges of influence for each of the six questions. A "no response" column was added to include the one per cent of teachers who chose not to respond to two of the six questions.

Well over half of the teachers surveyed (from 89 per cent to 98 per cent) responded positively to the influence that Man: A Course of Study had had on their general teaching styles or attitudes. This included thinking about what constitutes a good subject curriculum; attitudes on how children should be instructed; and how greater cooperation can be developed within the classroom or school. This high positive response to these questions shows strong influence by MACOS or general attitudes and beliefs. These general beliefs certainly are related to the teachers' basic overall philosophies of education, which affect thinking and actions in specific everyday learning situations and long term overall teaching careers.

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TABLE III

Influence of Man: A Course of Study Curriculum Relative to General Changes in Teaching Style and Attitudes Among Practicing Teachers*

Do you feel your exposure to the Macos curriculum and its related theory, organization, and pedagogy has:	No Response	Definitely Not	Probably Not	Probably Yes	Definitely Yes
A. influenced your thinking about what constitutes a good curriculum in any subject area?		1	2	36	61
B. provided you with skills or knowledge which can be applied to elementary teaching in general?		1	1	19	79
C. influenced your attitude about how teachers should instruct children		1	1	30	68
D. helped you develop greater cooperation with other teachers	1	6	35	49	9
E. helped you develop greater cooperation with your students?	1	1	6	53	39
F. helped you develop greater cooperation among students?		1	10	53	36

*All figures are expressed in percentages.

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Teaching Strategies Questionnaire

1. In what year were you enrolled in the course Teaching of Social Studies?

1970-71 ___1st Q ___2nd Q ___3rdQ ___4th Q

1971-72 ___1st Q ___2nd Q ___3rd Q ___4th Q

2. Have you taught in an elementary school since your graduation? ___Yes ___No

If yes, indicate the number of years:

___Less than 1 year
___1 year
___Between 1 and 2 years
___2 years
___Over 2 years

3. If you have never been employed in an elementary school, you do not have to complete the remainder of this questionnaire. Please sign your name below and return it, indicating your present occupation.

_____

If you have present or past teaching experience, please complete the remainder of the questionnaire.

4. Have you taught, or are you currently teaching elementary social studies? ___Yes ___No

If yes, please indicate the school, the district, and the grade level.

_____ _____ _____

If yes, indicate the format for the social studies you have taught or are presently teaching:

___history only
___geography only
___history and geography
___social studies (a combination of history, geography, sociology, economics, political science, anthropology)
___other

If other, please specify below:

_____

_____

5. Please evaluate the following teaching strategies according to the degree to which you were influenced by the undergraduate course Teaching of Social Studies, using Man: A Course of Study. Check the appropriate column(s).

Teaching Strategies	Do you use this strategy in your teaching		If yes, please indicate the degree of influence your MACOS course has had in your use of each of the teaching strategies.			
	Yes	No	Highly Influential	Moderately Influential	Slightly Influential	Not Influential
1. Comparing and contrasting						
2. Activities (learning by doing)						
3. Learning by observing						
4. Use of models						
5. Simulation games						
6. Organizing ideas by theme or concept						
7. Analytic and intuitive thinking						
8. Small discussion or working groups						
9. Large discussion or working groups						
10. Open-ended questions						
11. Student feedback questionnaires						
12. Problem-solving approach						
13. Value inquiry						
14. Non-narrated movies						
15. Illustrated booklets						
16. Role playing						
17. Problem-skits						

6. Indicate the subject areas, excluding social studies, in which you employ the various strategies from MACOS. In the column marked "others," please list other subject areas in which you feel you also employ any or all of the strategies.

Teaching Strategies	Check the column(s) of the subject areas							
	Reading	Math	Language Arts	Science		Others		
1. Comparing and contrast								
2. Activities (learning by doing)								
3. Learning by observing								
4. Use of models								
5. Simulation games								
6. Organizing ideas by theme or concept								
7. Analytic and intuitive thinking								
8. Small discussion or working groups								
9. Large discussion or working groups								
10. Open-ended questions								
11. Student feedback questionnaires								
12. Problem-solving approach								
13. Value inquiry								
14. Non-narrated movies								
15. Illustrated booklets								
16. Role playing								
17. Problem-skits								

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7. Do you feel your exposure to the MACOS curriculum and its related theory, organization, and pedagogy has:

	Definitely Not	Probably Not	Probably Yes	Definitely Yes
A. influenced your thinking about what constitutes a good curriculum in any subject area?				
B. provided you with skills or knowledge which can be applied to elementary teaching in general?				
C. influenced your attitude about how teachers should instruct children				
D. helped you develop greater cooperation with other teachers				
E. helped you develop greater cooperation with your students?				
F. helped you develop greater cooperation among students?				